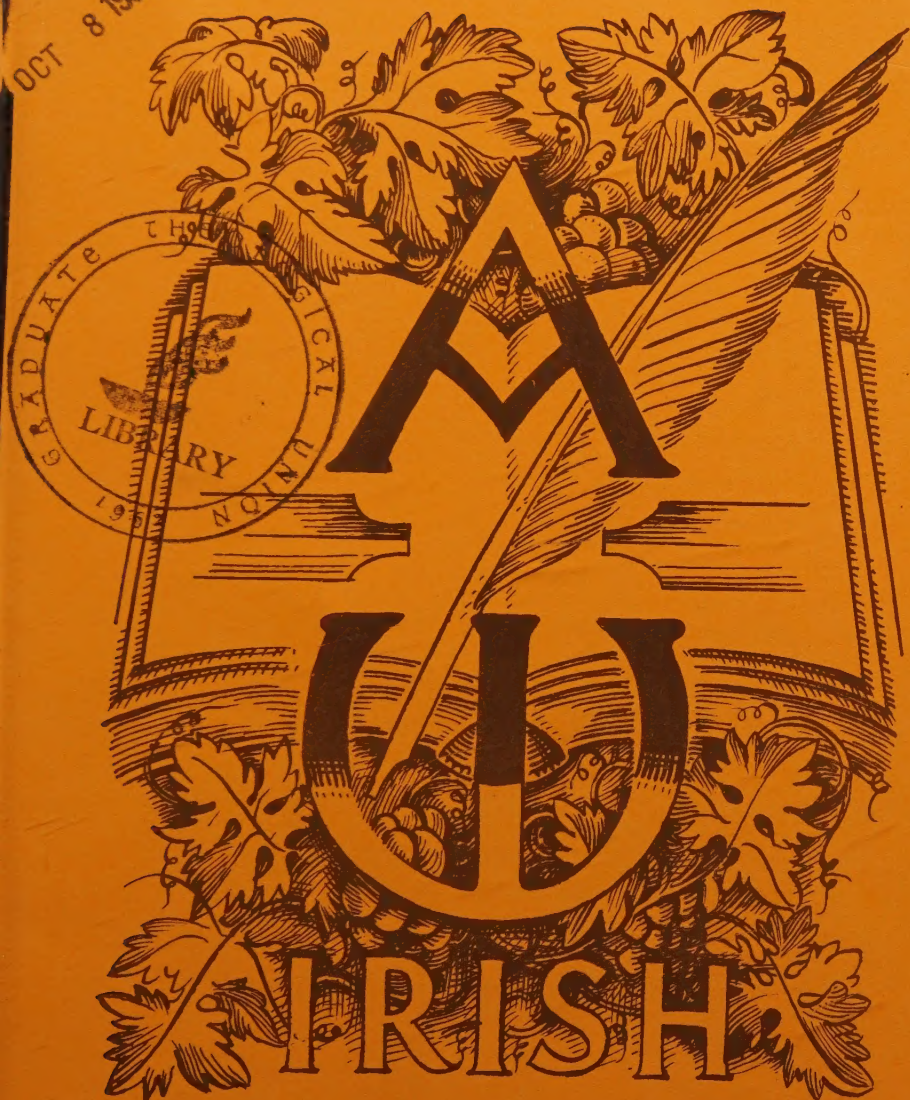


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"The Conquered Grave"

H.L.Ellison /1/

It would appear that the subject of life after death was one that could not become the subject of normal revelation until it was made clear by the Lord of Life Himself, but those who took the power and love of God seriously were allowed flashes of insight into what would be, however little they might understand how much was actually involved.

The OT and Death

One of the more remarkable features of the OT as a whole is its attitude towards death. It shows no trace of the Egyptian concern with the after-life and seems to be indifferent to the preservation of the body, though it does expect that the corpse should be interred with reasonable respect. The only examples of embalming seem to be Jacob and Joseph, which can be best explained by a conforming to the position they occupied in Egyptian society. It is interesting, though probably not significant, that when the time to leave Egypt came, Moses is said to have taken Joseph's bones, not body, with him (Exodus 13.19).

On the other hand, though it is clear that Israel shared the general Semitic concept of Sheol, the realm of the dead, there seems to have been no preoccupation with its nature. The AV rendered Sheol equally by grave and hell - three times pit - the former of these failing to bring out the force of the name, for there is a generally used word for grave, the latter proving seriously misleading, as some of the less informed devotional speculations on our Lord's descent into 'hell' show.

The general use of Sheol in RSV and so frequently in NEB has hardly caught on, and so TEV and NIV have abandoned its use. The former, however, is superior, when it renders "the world of the dead" in contrast to the latter's 'grave' with Sheol in the margin. This has led to the unpardonable rendering in Psalm 139.8

"If I make my bed in the depths" (NIV), for the margin "Sheol" will to the uninitiated be inadequate to bring home that the Psalmist is writing about death.

There are in fact only two passages which set out to give a more detailed picture of Sheol. One is the highly poetic taunt-song over the king of Babylon. (Isaiah 14.4-21), where only the extreme literalist is likely to take it as a picture of Sheol as it appears to the eye of the dead. This is even more so in Ezekial 32.17-32 with its tidy national compartments.

More typical is Job's picture of the mass of the dead, where both earthly differences and experiences have ceased to be meaningful (Job 3.11-19). This is essentially the same as Hezekiah's cry, "Sheol cannot thank thee, death cannot praise thee, those that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy faithfulness" (Isaiah 38.18).

This is a picture that springs directly from the Hebrew concept of man. Man is not an immortal soul or spirit that has temporarily entered a house of clay, but a being (nephesh) that has come into existence through the breath of life entering the body (Genesis 2.7). He can look to the world above through his spirit and to the world around through his body. When the spirit returns to God and the body to dust, the nephesh has not, as some maintain, ceased to exist. Its actions and experiences have so moulded the personality that it persists, though in shadowy form, unable to communicate with God or man.

That is presumably why the Bible does not tell us more about the dead, for we should not have been able to understand it, if it had. It is a form of existence we cannot picture. It is worth noting that none of the few that returned to life either in the OT or the NT had apparently any description of their experiences to pass on, and so sleep remains the outstanding description of those who have died in Christ. Though we know the first-begotten of the dead

the First-fruits of them that have fallen asleep, it is well to see how God gradually lifted his people to a fuller hope for the dead, though for the majority there remained only the resigned acceptance of inevitable death, with the hope of a full life first, and it may be a living on in their children and children's children. For those who were given a fuller hope it was the fruit of communion with God, of spiritual anguish and necessity.

Job (19.23-27)

When Job burst into his triumphant words, "I know that my Vindicator lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth...then from (or without) my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side", he was arguing from what he knew of God. He could not understand the way that God had treated him - in fact it was never explained to him - but he knew that his friends were desperately wrong both about him and about God.

In his agony, less about himself and more for the honour of God, for he was longing to die and to depart to the realm where the opinions of others would not matter, he suddenly knew that God would vindicate himself and reveal his character to his friends, and in so doing vindicate Job as well. After all, his friends were not self-satisfied atheists or agnostics, but lovers of God who had become enmeshed in men's traditional thinking about him and had thus substituted a waxwork dummy for the living reality. Just because God is God, Job knew that though he would be dead, he would have to share in that vindication, though he knew not how.

David (Psalm 139:8)

The same consciousness that God is really God and at least part of what this involved was also to lay hold on David. In Psalm 139 we have a most remarkable testimony to the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God, which has not been surpassed by any other passage in Scripture. Though some hesitate to

ascribe it to David, we should do well to see in it the aged king's meditation on God's hand over his whole life. With a shock he realises that Sheol cannot be outside the control of God and that there are no barriers to his presence there.

He does not draw the logical conclusion, for the reader must be left to draw it himself, but surely it is that the God who has beset him behind and before and laid his hand of power on him all his days, must surely do so too, when he has been laid in his grave and descended to the realm of the dead. It was not given to him to know how God's control and fellowship would work there, but it was sufficient for him to know that death would not mean separation from the one he had sought to serve, however imperfectly, all his life.

Linguistically it is impossible to decide a priori whether the closing words of Psalm 23 should be rendered "for ever" or "so long as I live". If, however, we attribute this psalm to David's old age, the vision we meet in Psalm 139 would strongly support the rendering "for ever". To the sentimentalist the picture of the shepherd lad, little thought of by his large family, comparing himself to the sheep for which he was responsible and looking to God to guide him through life, is most attractive. But to me it has always seemed more probable that we have in this psalm the aged king, who for forty years has been the shepherd of his people, acknowledging that he has had a shepherd all this time, so that he had been able to be a king after God's own heart, because God had been his king throughout. If that is so, we may see him expressing his confidence that when he lays down his ruler's staff, he will pass into the eternal dominion of his God, where he should behold his face in righteousness and be satisfied (psalm 17.15)

Asaph (Psalm 73.21-25)

Anyone who studies the Asaph psalms more closely

will soon convince himself that they cannot be the work of one individual alone. Chronological factors demand this conclusion. In other words, just like the psalms of the sons of Korah they are the work of a family of Levitical singers. But just as there are valid reasons for believing that Psalms 74 and 79 have a common author, so it is virtually certain that Psalms 77 and 73 sing of one man's experience.

In Psalm 77 we find him racked with illness and fighting desperately against a despondency which threatens to destroy his faith. In Psalm 73 he has recovered sufficiently to resume his Levitical duties only to face an even greater challenge to his faith. He finds that those who, by the simple popular theology we find in Job, should be suffering, are in fact prospering, while he has been near the gates of Sheol.

For the problems of life he finds an answer in the mystery of death. It is not merely that there is sudden and unexpected destruction for the wicked (vs 18-20). The God who has been with him all along, will lead him to glory, which in the context can surely not be confined to this life. He comes to realise that in the light of God all that earth can offer - and it is much - fades into insignificance (vs 24,25).

Here we are not far from the NT revelation, "Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12.2)

Isaiah (chs 25,26)

Up to this point we have dealt with those who were brought to realise that death could not bring a communion with God begun on this earth to an end. But there is no indication that they had any idea of how this was to be brought about.

In Isaiah 24-27 we have the prophet's vision of the

universal Day of the Lord. There are many who maintain that it cannot have been written by Isaiah and that it must be much later. Such a view gives no explanation as to how it came into its present position in the careful arrangement of chs. 1-35, nor can anything be pointed to which is out of keeping with the time of Isaiah and his stress on the Day of the Lord. As so often in this type of vision we have a strange mixture of sharp cut and extremely vague pictures, but out of them all we learn clearly that we are concerned with God's judgments, victory and the establishment of his perfect kingdom on earth.

So in 25.6-8 we find the millennial feast on Mount Zion, not merely for Israel but for all peoples. The feast implies fellowship and covenant relationship (Exodus 24.9-11). Sin has been conquered at long last; the curse of Eden is no more, and so death comes to an end. God has triumphed completely. In 26.12 the prophet turns specifically to Israel, which was mentioned only in passing in 25.8. When he says, "O, Lord Thou wilt ordain peace for us", the better rendering is "prosperity" (NEB). God shows the triumph he has gained in and through his people by the prosperity he grants them. That is followed by the confession that it has been God's doing throughout, and that his people were so often unfaithful (26.13-15)

The confession goes even deeper in vss 16-18. In the light of God's victory anything that Israel may have accomplished was mere wind. Though it is not expressed in words, behind all this there is a deep sense of tragedy. God has won the victory, but generations have fallen by the way without even the consolation of feeling that they had contributed something to the ultimate victory.

This is something that those who delight in painting the work of the church in the darkest colours, in assuring us that there are more non-Christians in the world than ever before, that the institutional church, whatever they may mean by the term, has lost any value that it may once have had, seem to forget. It is not

the church or Israel that brings in the day of salvation. It is God's work, Christ's victory. We must be grateful, if at the end of the day we can say, "We have stood fast" (Ephesians 6.13,14).

To the prophet, looking back in sorrow on the history of his people, God suddenly gives the vision that the triumphal fellowship banquet is not only for those who happen to survive as a remnant in the final judgments. The righteous dead too will share in the victory(vs.19), for they will rise. Here is the resurrection of the body in which those who share in God's victory will share.

For many tradition seems to have been too strong, and especially among the Sadducees there were many even in the time of Christ who had not grasped this truth. But while Ezekial 37.1-14 is, as is so often insisted, a picture of national, not individual resurrection, the picture could hardly have meant much to the exiles in Babylonia unless the concept of the resurrection of the individual's body had come to mean something to many. And so a hope that had attached itself at the first to the godly Israelite has in Daniel 12.2 extended to all. It is not, as is often suggested, a resurrection of the very good and very bad. The "many" in this passage is as in Isaiah 53.12 "all" and they are very many.

God has not stripped death of its mysteries. There is much that we can affirm only at our peril, much that we shall not know until we, like so many before us, have to taste it. But we do know that our Lord has the keys of Death and Hades (Sheol), and that we go to be with Him, the Lord of Life, who lives for evermore. Though we know not what to expect as we await the resurrection call, let us never forget that God is God, and so it will surpass all that we expect or think.

Note

1. We are grateful to the Editor of the "Hebrew Christian" for permission to print this article; Mr Ellison is member of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance, sometime missionary in Poland and Rumania, lecturer in the London School of Divinity and London Bible College, and author of numerous books and articles.

Codex Bezae at Acts 15

I.M. Ellis /1/

General Introduction to the Ms

In 1582 Theodore de Beze presented the bi-lingual Ms, Codex Bezae, to the University of Cambridge. The symbol for the Greek side of this ms. is D, and d represents the Latin parallel side.

Although Codex Bezae has been the subject of a vast amount of research, its exact date and place of origin have not yet been established beyond question. It has traditionally been placed in the fifth and sixth centuries AD, yet H.J. Frede could recently suggest a fourth century dating. /2/

There have been almost twenty correctors of this manuscript. As all but one of these correctors were concerned with the Greek side, a location of origin in the Greek world seems probable. Such a location would have to be one where Latin was also known. Contemporary scholarly opinion looks to Southern Italy or Sicily as the place of Codex Bezae's origin. In Sicily during the period 4th-6th centuries, the official language was Latin while the popular language remained Greek. The theory that Codex Bezae originated in Lyons where Theodore de Beze found it, clearly does not commend itself, as Lyons was well removed from the Greek world.

The concentration of research on Codex Bezae has naturally tended to be with its text in Acts, for here it is highly distinctive. Professor E.J. Epp was able to conclude that in the Bezan Acts the Jews and their leaders are portrayed as more hostile to both Jesus and the apostles than elsewhere. /3/ At Acts 13.29, for example, D adds the Jews' specific request that Jesus should be crucified:

RSV

13.28. Though they could charge him with nothing deserving death, yet they asked Pilate to have him killed.

D

And finding not one cause of death in him, judging him, they delivered him to Pilate to be killed.

13.29. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.

And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they asked Pilate that he should be crucified. And when they had again obtained this, and having taken him down from the tree, they laid him in a tomb.

These verses in D imply that, before they had delivered him to Pilate, the Jews had already decided that Jesus should be crucified. Implicit here is also a certain removal of guilt from Pilate; it had been the Jews' decision, not his. Pilate's innocence is thus given a particular emphasis in D.

Acts 15 - The Council of Jerusalem

There are over thirty distinctive readings in Codex Bezae at Acts 15. Some which display the particular spirit of D are set out below:

RSV

D

15.2. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles about this question.

And Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, for Paul spoke confidently affirming that they should remain so, as when they believed: but those who had come from Jerusalem charged Paul and Barnabas and certain others to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders, so that they might be judged before them about this question.

The dissension and debate concerned the issue of circumcision. The D-text is particularly sympathetic to Paul and Barnabas, and stresses its point by describing Paul as "confidently affirming" that Gentile converts should remain uncircumcised.

It is generally accepted that there were at least two judaizing parties: those who had come from Judea (15.1f), and believers in Jerusalem (15.5). In D there is only one judaizing party; those who came from Judea (15.1) are identified in D (15.2) as the judaizing party from Jerusalem. Further, in D the Judaizers charge Paul and Barnabas and certain others to go to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for judgment. The subsequent judgment in Jerusalem is thus emphasized as a defeat of the Judaizers. In D it is they who ask for the judgment in the first place.

The D text has thus given extra emphasis to Paul's position in the debate, and has also minimized the judaizing party, exposing their folly.

RSV

15.4. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders.....

D

And when they came to Jerusalem, they were received in great fashion by the church and the apostles and elders.....

The variant here appears to be innocuous. Yet its simplicity conceals an important implication. We have already noted that at D 15.2 it is the judaizing party from Jerusalem which demands and charges that judgment be made by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. The assertion that those who came to Jerusalem were welcomed "in great fashion" implies that the judaizing party was not of significant strength in the Jerusalem church. Moreover in D this is the only judaizing party. The warmth of the welcome extended by the Jerusalem church thus minimizes the importance of the judaizing party.

RSVD

15.7. And after there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them.....

And when there had been much debate, Peter rose up in the Spirit and said to them.....

The speech of Peter is introduced by D in a way which accords it pneumatic authority. Peter's words are not his own, but those of the Spirit. Peter's point of view is identical to that of Paul and thus, indirectly, D asserts that Paul's view had been consonant with the will of God while the Judaizers had been at variance with God. The phrase "in the Spirit" has a significance, not only for Peter, but for Paul also. Moreover Professor Epp has noted /4/ that the insertion of this phrase in D serves to contrast Peter's speech with that of James which represents a 'compromising' position. Once again, an apparently innocent variant in D conceals important implications.

RSVD

15.12 And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul.....

And the elders agreed to what had been spoken by Peter, and all the multitude kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul.

Verse 11 concludes Peter's speech; the variant in D thus provides immediately the reaction of the elders. They agreed to what Peter had said in his speech. Without this addition, no specific reaction to Peter's speech is given in the text of Ch.15. James's speech follows immediately and the conclusion of the debate is

the adoption of the suggestion which he makes, that a letter should be sent. As we have noted under 15.7, Peter's speech expresses the mind of Paul while the speech of James is more qualified. The addition of this clause in D thus completely vindicates Paul over against the Judaizers while without the addition it might appear that the Judaizers had partly won their case.

RSV *15.20*

15.20and from unchastity and from what is strangled and from blood.

D

... and from unchastity _____ and from blood, and that whatsoever they would not should be done to them, do not to others.

The omission of "that which is strangled" in D lessens the Jewish tone of the instructions. This lessening is then followed by an emphasis on the negative Golden Rule.

Although the Golden Rule is to be found in the Talmud, here it serves to contrast the Spirit and the Law. D thus alters the sense of the letter which James recommended, so that it is characterized by an appeal to that which is intended to set the Christian Gospel over against the Law, viz., the Spirit. The same variant occurs again at 15.29. Again, any hint that the Judaizers may have found any justification at Jerusalem is definitely weakened in D.

This addition is also found in certain minuscules, Irenaeus, the Sahidic and Codex Ardmachanus, the Book of Armagh.

RSV *15.32*

15.32. And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words and strengthened them.

D

And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, full of the Holy Spirit, exhorted the brethren by _____ words and strengthened them.

The Spirit has been introduced into the text of Acts in D at various points: at 15.7 where special authority is given to the speech of Peter; at 15.29 where the Law is set in the context of the church, the Spirit-filled community; again here at 15.32 the Spirit is mentioned, not to give authority to Judas or Silas but to emphasize the pneumatic essence of prophecy and the presence of the Spirit in the church, which makes it the New Israel.

Conclusions

The alterations to the text of Acts in Codex Bezae form a consistent pattern which betrays particular emphases. They are intentional and polemical. We can summarize the aims of the distinctive Bezan readings which have been set out above:

- (1) To emphasize Paul's position over against the Judaizers
- (2) To minimize the size and influence of the Judaizing party
- (3) To give pneumatic authority to Peter's speech and, indirectly, to Paul's position
- (4) To emphasize that Peter's speech was agreed upon
- (5) To set the letter from Jerusalem in the context of the community of the Spirit, the church
- (6) To show that the church is to be distinguished from Judaism by the presence of the Spirit.

NOTES

1. The Revd Ian Ellis is an Honours Graduate in Biblical Theology at Queen's University, Belfast. He is Chaplain to Armagh Royal School and engaged in research work into Codex Bezae in Matthew.

2. H.J. Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, Freiburg, 1964, p.18, Anm.4, as in Metzger, Text, Oxford, 1968, p.264.
3. E.J. Epp, Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae in Acts, Cambridge, 1966.
4. *ibid.* pp.103f.

Some recent developments in Research on the
Epistle to the Hebrews

J.C. McCullough

The purpose of this article is to describe and assess some of the trends which have appeared in recent scholarship in connection with a few of the main problems associated with the Epistle. No effort has been made at completeness, since it would be impossible in an article of this size to comment on every work that has appeared in the last twenty years, especially where that work is concerned with only a single verse of the Epistle. Rather the purpose is to concentrate on some main areas of discussion, to summarize earlier contributions and to assess more recent ones, especially those made in the last twenty years. The areas to be considered are: authorship, religious background, date, area to which the epistle was sent, literary genre, literary structure, use of the OT, individual themes and passages.

Authorship

"Without father, without mother, without genealogy" (Heb.7.3). In these words Overbeck summed up the state of knowledge about the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews in his day. Scholars since then have not been able to add much to that knowledge. Certainly by the early sixties many names had been suggested as possible authors: these included Paul /1/, Barnabas, Apollos, Judas, Silas, Luke, Clement of Rome, Peter, Philip, Timothy, Aristion, Mark and Priscilla but no agreement had emerged and most scholars had given up trying to find some new name or discover new support for a name already suggested. In recent years, however, one or two scholars have again tried to champion one or other of the names suggested earlier.

Martigno Roncaglia, for example, in his important book, Histoire de l'Eglise copte /2/ tried to revive the thesis which had been championed by Luther, and which more recently has been argued by Montefiore /3/

Spicq /4/ , T.W. Manson /5/ , and several others /6/ that Apollos was the author. He listed many reasons for accepting Apollos /7/, but seemed to be offering no decisive new argument which would compel scholars to reconsider their position. /8/ In 1969, R. Hoppin /9/ revived Harnack's old theory that the authors were Aquila and Priscilla, but that prejudice against women teachers in the church led to the suppression of the names. /10/. It is doubtful, however, if she produced enough evidence to win scholarly acceptance. J.M. Robinson /11/ has revived the claims of Barnabas as the author, but again without enough decisive new evidence to gain universal support.

While, however, little progress has been made since Overbeck's day as regards positive identification of the author, one question concerning the authorship at least has been settled, namely that concerning Pauline authorship. There seems to be general agreement that no matter who did write the epistle, Paul did not. This has been the opinion of Protestant scholars for some time, but since the Decree of the Papal Biblical Commission (Divino Afflante Spiritu) in 1943 and a subsequent letter of P. Vosté to Cardinal Suhard, /12/ more and more Catholic scholars have considered that the epistle was written by a Pauline pupil rather than Paul himself. /13/ As Coppens /14/ says: 'L'Épître aux Hébreux n'est plus guère retenue dans le dossier paulinien. "

While, therefore, modern scholars perhaps would not go as far as Dibelius in 1926 /15/ when he described the question of authorship as "uninteresting", nevertheless they would agree with Moffatt when he says "the identity of the author and of his readers must be left in the mist where they already lay at the beginning of the second century". /16/.....an obvious reference to Origen's oft quoted remark that God only knows who wrote Hebrews. /17/ There the matter must rest.

Religious Background

The question of the religious background of the epistle has been an important one in the past decade of

NT scholarship because it has raised several issues which are pertinent to the much wider debate concerning the religious thought world of the first and second centuries AD, in particular the relationship between the literature found at Qumran, the Coptic gnostic library found near Nag Hammadi, Jewish writings from Alexandria and early Jewish mystical writings and the NT. We will consider the present state of research on the religious background of Hebrews under four sections: Hebrews and Philo, Hebrews and Qumran; Hebrews and Gnosticism; Hebrews and Merkaba mysticism.

Hebrews and Philo

According to C. Spicq it was Grotius who first drew attention in 1644 to the influence of Philo upon Hebrews.

/18/ This view received some support in the 18th century /19/, was accepted almost without question at the end of the 19th century, but became less and less popular during the 20th century. It was, however, in the 20th century that this theory of Philonic influence upon the epistle to the Hebrews received its most vehement and well documented support, through the work of Spicq. In chapter iii of the first volume of his commentary he offered a massive amount of evidence for the dependence of the author of the epistle upon Philo. This evidence was based on a thorough examination of the author's vocabulary, literary style, theological arguments, exegetical methods, schemes of thought, psychology and on a discussion of Hebrews 11. His conclusion was that while the author of Hebrews is no plagiarist, nevertheless

His affinities with the philosopher of Alexandria which have their origin neither in an identity of readers nor in a similarity of the subjects which are discussed, compels one to conclude that at a minimum he studied Philo's work and probably even that he knew him personally and was taught by him. /20/

In spite of the massive erudition with which Spicq supported his claim that the author of Hebrews was "un philonien converti au christianisme" /21/, most scholars have been reluctant to accept that conclusion,

but rather have tended to ascribe the affinities perceived between the works of Philo and the epistle to the Hebrews to a common Alexandrian background. F. Schröger, for example, in a relatively recent book on the epistle gives as his judgment that

It is only with the greatest reserve that one can draw conclusions about a direct use of Philo by the redactor of the epistle to the Hebrews, because in the vast majority of cases, the "influence" is to be explained better through the same spiritual background and general Alexandrian culture rather than direct literary dependence. /22/

In a slightly earlier book S.G. Sowers had argued on the basis of the affinities between the works of Philo and Hebrews, that the author of Hebrews came "from the same school of Alexandrian Judaism as Philo, and that Philo's writings still offer us the best single body of religionsgeschichtlich material we have for the NT document". /23/ But he did not postulate a direct relationship, rather a geographical proximity.

In 1970, however, Spicq's views were directly challenged by Professor Williamson, in a book entitled Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews. /24/ He examined the affinities between the epistle and the works of Philo under three heads: Linguistic evidence, themes and ideas, use of Scripture. /25/ His conclusion after almost 600 pages of well documented argument is:

We can only insist that in the realm of vocabulary there is no proof that the choice of words displayed in the Epistle to the Hebrews has been influenced by Philo's lexicographical thesaurus. In the use of the OT made by the two writers, striking and fundamental differences of outlook and exegetical method appear... But it is in the realm of ideas, of the thought which words and OT texts were used to express and support that the most significant differences between Philo and the writer of Hebrews emerge. /26/

Williamson's book succeeded, in my view, in its narrow objective of proving that the author of the Hebrews was not a converted follower of Philo and has been a salutary warning against trying to define the religious background of the epistle within too narrow limits. It did not, however, attempt to solve the wider problem of determining the milieu against which the epistle was written and left open the possibility that in trying to gain an accurate picture of this milieu, scholars might find the writings of Philo to be very fruitful in indicating the type of thought world in which the epistle arose.

Hebrews and Qumran

The discovery and gradual publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls beginning in 1949 gave a new impetus to studies seeking to find the religious background against which Hebrews was written. The first commentary to mention the Dead Sea Scrolls in connection with Hebrews was that of Michel in the tenth edition of the Kritisch Exegetischer Kommentar in 1957, /27/ where he added an appendix underlining the important parallels between Hebrews and Qumran. It was Yadin, however, in a lecture given in 1957 /28/ but published in 1958 /29/ who was the first to draw far reaching conclusions about the relationship between Hebrews and Qumran. He argued that

" At the outset it should be emphasized that the main part of Hebrews is concerned with proving the superiority of Jesus over several persons and heavenly creatures of Messianic or eschatological character who, according to the beliefs of the readers, are either superior to Jesus as a lay Messiah, or were appointed to perform some function at the End of Days which, according to the writer, are reserved for Jesus the Messiah." /30/

According to Yadin, the people who held such beliefs were sectaries of Qumran and hence he assumed that the epistle was written to a group who held many of the Qumran sect's beliefs. /31/ Kosmala took this

view one step further by arguing that the addressees of the epistle were in fact an Essene congregation and that the purpose of the epistle was to urge them to become Christians. /32/ By the early sixties, however, scholars were becoming more cautious about claiming too much concerning the relationships between Hebrews and Qumran, and two important articles helped to point scholarship in a more fruitful direction. /33/ Both articles argued that the differences between the ideas found in the Scrolls and those found in Hebrews were more significant than the similarities and that the similarities could be explained easily by reference to the sharing of a common cultural milieu. On the one hand, therefore, they came to the negative conclusion that to call the recipients of Hebrews "Essenes" or "converted Essenes" or "spiritual brethren of the men of Qumran" would be "outstripping the evidence". /34/ On the other hand they took up the argument already proposed by Michel /35/ and Flusser /36/ that the recipients of Hebrews and the sectaries shared a common cultural milieu, without postulating direct historical connections. In the early sixties, therefore, work on the relationship between Hebrews and Qumran became a matter of painstaking comparisons and studies of the affinities between the two groups within the context of their religio-cultural background. /37/

However, in 1965 the publication /38/ of a group of 13 small fragments discovered in Cave II at Qumran brought a new dimension to the discussion. In these fragments Melchisedek is a kind of celestial figure, a 'god' (Fitzmyer's translation) or 'celestial being', (Van der Woude's translation) perhaps even the leading celestial being who is associated with divine judgment against Belial and his host at the end time. In connection with that judgment is mentioned an act of atonement in the Year of Jubilee and also the redemption promised in several OT passages /39/ which involves the liberation of God's people. The Sons of Light, as the inheritance of Melchisedek, are his companions in this judgment.

Yadin immediately suggested a direct connection between the Melchisedek mentioned in II Q Melch. and the Epistle to the Hebrews, postulating that the author of Hebrews who was addressing converted Essenes, deliberately chose the figure of Melchisedek because he was already known in the Qumran sect "in order to convey more intimately and decisively his perception of Jesus' unique position." /40/ Other scholars were more cautious, however, Van der Woude, for example, in his article in which he introduced the fragments to the public suggested that the reference to Melchisedek in II Q Melch. helps us to understand the tradition which the author of Hebrews was using in Heb. 7.2-3, but he did not postulate any direct connection between Hebrews and II Q Melch. This is made even more explicit in his later article written in co-operation with De Jonge where they state: "Neither the points of connexion between Hebrews and the Qumran literature already noticed nor the new material in II Q Melch. enable us, however, to state with certainty that Hebrews is directed against adherents of the Qumran sect; we should say with more caution that II Q Melch. helps us to understand certain ways of thinking in the Judaism of the first century AD which form the background against which the argumentation in Heb. 1-2 can be understood." /42/ This view is also shared by Fitzmyer who believes that the presentation of Melchisedek in Qumran with its exaltation of him as a heavenly redemptive figure "makes it understandable how the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews could argue for the superiority of Christ the high priest over the Levitical priesthood by appeal to such a figure". /43/

Even this view, however, has been challenged in recent years as some scholars have suggested that the occurrence of Melchisedek in the Epistle to the Hebrews can be understood without reference to Qumran. Horton, for example, suggested that the author chose Melchisedek because as the first priest to be mentioned in the OT, he has a role similar to that of Jesus who is the first priest of the New Covenant. /44/ I have argued that the author chose Melchisedek because he figured in Ps. 110, one of the basic OT passages of the Epistle and the NT. /45/ Buchanan saw parallels between the

Hasmonaeans' use of the Melchisedek figure and that found in Hebrews and argued that "the author of Hebrews, like the supporters of the Hasmonaeans, justified on the basis of Scripture, a position for Jesus that he could not have merited on the basis of family lineage. Both used Ps. 110 to support their view". /46/ In any case, in my view, it is not absolutely necessary to postulate any influence from Qumran to explain why the author of Hebrews appealed to the figure of Melchisedek. He may, of course, have known many traditions about Melchisedek /47/, but his arguments do not demand knowledge of any traditions apart from those found in the OT.

The enthusiasm and "parallelomania" /48/ which greeted the initial discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the subsequent publication of II Q Melch. has now given way to a much more sober assessment of the affinities between Hebrews and Qumran. The general consensus of opinion seems to be that it is impossible to prove direct historical connection between the recipients of Hebrews and Qumran. Nevertheless it is also agreed that the writings of Qumran, along with other contemporary literature, throw valuable light on the general religious and cultural climate in which Hebrews was written.

Gnosticism

Several scholars have argued that the epistle to the Hebrews is written to combat some kind of gnostic heresy. R. Perdelwitz /49/, for example, suggested that Jewish Christian gnosticism was the key to understanding the tendency which the author of the epistle was attacking. Later in 1942 G. Bornkamm /50/ argued that the danger which the author of Hebrews was combatting was that of lapsing into the kind of syncretistic gnostic Judaism which is also opposed in the Pastorals and Colossians. In 1949 T.W. Manson /51/ took up the same theme arguing that the epistle was written by Apollos to the churches of the Lycus valley to correct a tendency which some years later developed into the "Colossian heresy". He thought that Chs 1-10 present "a complete refutation of the Colossian heresy as that heresy is described by Lightfoot." /52/

While these views, that the epistle is directed against Gnosticism, have not gained much support, another view has been widely discussed. It is that Gnosticism has supplied some of the thought patterns of the epistle. This view was argued forcefully by Käsemann in 1938 in his monograph entitled "Das wandernde Gottesvolk". /53/ He said that the main theme of the epistle was that of the "Wandering people of God" and that this theme and the christology of the epistle could not have been developed except in soil already prepared by Gnosticism. He believed that the christology of Hebrews was based upon a gnostic anthropos myth which had independent existence in late Judaism. One of the obvious weaknesses of Käsemann's argument when it was presented was that there was no evidence at that time for gnostic speculation which could be shown to be pre-Christian or independent of early Christianity. Since the writing of the book, however, a great deal of research has been undertaken, partly due to the important Nag Hammadi finds and, as a result, more and more scholars have been prepared to postulate an early form of Gnosticism which was independent of Christianity. /54/

The Nag Hammadi finds, however, have had other effects on scholarly inquiry. They have led scholars to try to trace the influence of gnostic ideas, or ideas taken up later in gnostic systems of thought, in a much wider range of literature than had previously been done. Some scholars, for example, have postulated that the Qumran sect belonged to the general milieu from which Gnosticism arose. /55/ Cullmann argued that there existed on the periphery of official Judaism a form of Jewish Gnosticism and that Qumran has furnished us with evidence about that form of Judaism. /56/ Other scholars have tried to trace gnostic influences on Philo. /57/ Obviously, therefore, there is a tendency to define Gnosticism in terms much wider than had been done previously, when Gnosticism was used to describe second century Christian heresies against which the early church fathers had done battle. /58/ Rather it is seen as a general movement of thought, as Robinson and Koester describe it, "a continuous probing of alternatives within heterodox Judaism on the basis of the OT all the way from Qumran to Nag Hammadi". /59/

The question, therefore, which is being asked now concerning the relationship of the epistle of the Hebrews to Gnosticism is: what particular place does the epistle occupy in this complicated and still very obscure world of "heterodox Judaism", which existed alongside "orthodox Judaism". Obviously a definitive answer to this question can only be given when much more is known about Gnosticism and the religious world in which the author lived. /60/

Merkabah Mysticism

One of the most interesting recent attacks on Käsemann's position was that made by O. Hofius in his Habilitationsschrift published in 1972. /61/ While his thesis was limited to a discussion of the concept of the "Curtain before God's throne", his insights have relevance for an understanding of all of the epistle. He suggested four possible religious backgrounds for the concept of the "Curtain" in Hebrews: Merkabah mysticism of Jewish Apocalyptic; Rabbinic thought; Jewish-Hellenistic thought as found in Philo and Josephus; Gnosticism. After a discussion of all four possibilities he argued that the first is the most likely and that the Pargot speculation of the Merkabah mysticism of Jewish Apocalyptic is the background against which the author of the epistle formed his concept of the "Curtain". This suggestion of a Merkabah mysticism background for some ideas in the epistle is not limited to Hofius, however. H.M. Schenke, writing in the Festschrift for Herbert Braun published in 1973 /62/ after considering in some detail the teaching about angels and about Melchisedek in Hebrews came to the conclusion that "the essential background of Hebrews.....is a quite specific early form of Jewish Merkabah-mysticism out of which the author comes and which still determines his thought forms as a Christian". /63/

R. Williamson /64/ has given Schenke's views a positive but cautious reception:

On the whole, then, while the evidence is not strong enough to prove beyond all shadow of reasonable doubt that a form of first century Merkabah mysticism is the personal background against which the thought and language of

Hebrews can best be interpreted, it does seem that enough exists to make such a hypothesis probable". /65/

Clearly then much work has still to be done, both in learning more of this aspect of early Judaism /66/ and then in a sober assessment of the relationship of the epistle to it. This assessment must be made with the realisation that Merkabah mysticism is only one element in the "Kaleidoscopic Judaism of the first century Hellenistic world" /67/ , and that while "an early form of Merkabah mysticism explains some of the peculiar features of the thought and language of Hebrews; the search must still go on for the explanation of others". /68/

Conclusion

The tendency in recent studies on the religious background of the epistle to the Hebrews, has been, therefore, to abandon the attempt to see the epistle's background in terms of only one scheme of thought, be it that found at Qumran, or in Philo and other forms of Judaism, or in Gnosticism. Rather scholars have concentrated on trying to gain clearer knowledge of the religious pluralism and diversity within heterodox Judaism and then to place the epistle to the Hebrews in that context. Obviously this is a much greater task than merely drawing parallels (in terms of vocabulary, theology etc.) between the epistle and other contemporary writings and then concluding that the epistle either does or does not show affinity with those writingsbut it is a task which is infinitely more worthwhile and promises to yield more lasting results.

Date and Area to which Hebrews was sent

Clearly with no general consensus of opinion as to the authorship or the religious background of the epistle, there can be no agreement on either the date of composition or the area to which the epistle was sent. Most main towns between Rome and Jerusalem have been mentioned as possible places where the recipients could have lived, but as yet no consensus of opinion has emerged among

scholars. As regards date, the terminus ad quem is fairly clearly fixed at AD 96, since the epistle is quoted in 1 Clement 36.2-5, but scholars are divided as to whether AD 70, the year of the Fall of Jerusalem, is relevant for dating the epistle or not. /69/ Two of the most recent writers on the epistle have argued that it must have been written before AD 70 since otherwise the fall of the Jerusalem cult would certainly have been mentioned. /70/ It remains to be seen whether this very early dating for the epistle will gain support in scholarship on Hebrews.

Literary Genre

The epistle to the Hebrews ends like an epistle. Its Benediction, personal words of exhortation and mention of Timothy all suggest that a letter is being completed. The long balanced period however which begins the epistle does not fit in any way into this picture of a letter. It suggests rather an essay or a formal sermon. Hence the question, is the epistle a letter, a writing or a sermon? Some scholars have tried to answer the question by postulating that either the beginning or the end of the epistle is not original /71/; or that the omission of greetings at the beginning was typical of the Near-Eastern letter form. /72/ A more recent suggestion has been that Hebrews is a pseudepigraphical letter whose beginning can be found in fragmentary fashion in Romans 16.25ff. /73/ The most generally held opinion, however, has been that the epistle is a sermon which the author sent to a community. One of the most cogent defences of this position was given by H. Thyen, /74/ who argued that Hebrews was written in the style of the Jewish Hellenistic homily, a style also found in Philo's allegorical commentary on Genesis, 1 Clement, 4 Maccabees James, parts of 1 and 3 Maccabees, Stephen's speech in Acts 7, Didache 1-6 and 16, Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermas, parts of Tobit, Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs and the Wisdom of Solomon. While doubts have been expressed about whether Thyen has proved his assertion that the style of the epistle is that of the Jewish-Hellenistic homily as opposed to that of the Jewish-Palestinian

one /75/ there seems to be general agreement with his basic assumption that except for the few verses which come at the end of the epistle, Hebrews is a carefully constructed homily of the type preached in synagogues of the first century. /76/

Literary Structure

In recent years there has been an upsurge of interest among NT scholars in what has been termed "rhetorical criticism" /77/ or "structural analysis" and application of this method to certain aspects of NT criticism has proved extremely fruitful. /78/ It is, therefore, not surprising, in view of the obvious care with which the author of the epistle has presented his themes, that close attention has been paid to the problem of discerning the literary structure of Hebrews.

In 1940 L. Vaganay published an important article entitled "Le Plan de l'Épître aux Hébreux", /79/ in which he suggested that the epistle should be divided into five sections:

- A. Jesus superior to the angels (1.5-2.18)
- B. Jesus faithful high priest
compassionate high priest (3.1-5.10)
- C. Jesus, priest according to the order of
Melchisedek
made perfect
author of eternal salvation
(5.11-10.39)
- D. Faith
and perseverance (11.1-12.13)
- E. The Duty of Holiness (12.14-13.21)

As the outline shows, by the year 1940 Vaganay was already drawing attention to a definite symmetrical structure in the epistle with sections A and E each having one line, sections B and D two lines each and section C, the middle section, three lines with the middle line summarizing the central theme of the epistle. Thus he pointed out that the epistle was constructed symmetrically, following the principle of inversion, a principle which has been found to determine the structure of other NT and OT passages. /80/

It was A. Vanhoye, however, who systematically examined the epistle from the point of view of its structure. /81/ He suggested not only that the Epistle had a symmetrical structure but that the author had used literary devices to make known his structure. He listed six such devices:

1. Announcement of the subject. This is a brief sentence or phrase before each major part which presents the theme to be discussed and its principal divisions.

2. Inclusion. This involves the use of the same word at the beginning and the end of a part or section.

3. Hook words. These are words at the beginning of a paragraph repeated from the end of the preceding paragraph and designed to "hook" the two paragraphs together.

4. Characteristic terms. These are terms which are repeated within a section to give it a distinct physiognomy.

5. Alternation of the use of literary structure. This involves the change from one type of discourse to another, especially the change from doctrinal exposition to paraenesis.

6. Symmetrical arrangement. This phrase is used to describe the many patterns formed from correspondences in many details within sections.

Following these principles he elaborated on the outline already suggested by Vaganay and suggested the following outline on his own:

1.1-4 Exordium

1.5-2.18 A name so different from the name of the angels

3.1-4.14 Jesus faithful

4.15-5.10 Jesus compassionate high priest

5.11-6.20 Preliminary exhortation

7.1-28 Jesus high priest according to Melchisedek

8.1-9.28 Come to fulfilment

10.1-18 Cause of eternal salvation

10. 19-39 Final exhortation

11.1,40 The faith of the men of old

12.1-13 The endurance required

12.14-13.19 The peaceful fruit of justice

13.20-21 Peroration

He also analysed very thoroughly the literary structure of individual sections of the epistle.

Most scholars welcomed the book enthusiastically, but many, while agreeing with the main principles behind the work, expressed caution about accepting the findings in toto /82/ and offered alternative outlines of their own. /83/ J. Swetnam, for example, in two important articles in Biblica /84/ suggested an outline which took into greater account the role of content than in Vanhoye's scheme. His primary, literary criteria for indicating structure were "announcements", genres of exposition and paraenesis and length of sections, as well as content, but he assigned a subsidiary role to "hook words", "characteristic words" and "inclusions". His outline is as follows:

- a. 1.1-4 Exordium
- A. 1.5-2.18 Exposition: Christ as divine and human
 - 1.5-2.4 Christ as superior to angels(i.e. divine)
 - 2.5-18 Christ as brother to men(i.e.human)
- B. 3.1-6.20 Exhortation: to faith and hope
 - 3.1-4.13 To faith (based on divinity of Christ)
 - 4.14-6.20 To hope (based on humanity of Christ)
- C. 7.1-10.18 Exposition: Who Jesus was and what he did
 - 7.1-28 Who Jesus was (high priest according to the order of Melchisedek, human and divine)
 - 8.1-10.18 What Jesus did (enter the Holy of Holies and sit at right hand of God)
- D. 10.19-39 Exhortation: response to what Christ did: Love and good works.
- E. 11.1-13.21 Exposition-Exhortation: faith, hope and charity in salvation history

- 11.1-12.2 Faith as an objective reality pointing to the unseen
- 12.3-39 Endurance(hope) based on example of Jesus for obtaining an unshakeable kingdom
- 13.1-21 Response to God's act in Christ: Christian life as an act of thanksgiving.

Clearly the discussions about the correct outline and literary structure for the epistle will continue for some time to come. As a result of discussions already held, however, some things have become clear.

Firstly, attention must be paid to literary techniques, such as those listed by Vanhoye /85/ and Swetnam /86/ used by the author to indicate structural divisions; hence all insights gained from "rhetorical criticism", must be applied. But secondly, in my view, it is above all the content of the epistle which must be the final decisive factor in determining what outline the author followed. J. Swetnam's words must be heeded by every scholar who would undertake rhetorical criticism of the epistle:

The successes or failure of the attempt (to outline the structure of the epistle) is to be judged by the convergence of formal literary principles, content, and structure into a plausible literary whole which is consonant with Christian tradition: for the suppositions on which the present article is based are 1) that Hebrews is a finely worked piece of literary art and 2) that Hebrews was written and transmitted in the milieu of the primitive and early Christian church. The "proof" - - - or non-proof - - - in other words, is the illumination - - or lack thereof - which the present paper gives the reader. Does the present article aid the reader to make more sense out of the first six chapters of Hebrews than previous attempts at structuring? That is the question.

/87/

When this caveat is heeded, then hopefully one day we will have a structured outline for the epistle on which most scholars can agree and which will throw light on our understanding of the content of the epistle.

Notes

1. Defenders of Pauline authorship were plentiful among the Church Fathers as well as more recently, and need not be listed. One Father who is not so well known, however, was "Basrin the Syrian", who transcribed the Mt Sinai Arabic ms 151 in AD 867, and who gave four pages of argument in favour of the Pauline authorship of the epistle. Cf. H. Staal, "Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews according to Mt Sinai Arabic ms 151", Reformed Review 21, 1967, pp 14ff.
2. M. Roncaglia, Histoire de l'Eglise Copte, Lebanon, 1966, T.1.
3. H. Montefiore, The Epistle to the Hebrews, London 1964, 9ff.
4. C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux, Paris 1952/3³, T.1, 210ff.
5. T.W. Manson, "The Problem of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Studies in the Gospels and Epistles, Philadelphia 1962, 242ff. (originally printed in BJRL 43, 1949/50, 1ff.) He suggested that the epistle was written by Apollos to the churches in the Lycus valley to correct a tendency which later developed into the Colossian heresy.
6. e.g. J. Hering, L'Épître aux Hébreux, Paris 1955, 12 and F. Lo Bue, "The historical background of the Epistle to the Hebrews," JBL 75, 1956, 52-57. He gives a list of authors who support this hypothesis, and suggests that Apollos wrote the epistle from Ephesus to Jewish Christians in Corinth.
7. op.cit. 21ff
8. Ibid. The arguments he offers are a repetition of those offered by C. Spicq, op.cit., T1, 211ff
9. R. Hoppin, Priscilla, Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and other essays, New York 1969.
10. A. Harnack, "Probabilia über die Adresse und der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes", ZNW 1, 1900, 16-41
11. J.A.T. Robinson, Redating the NT, London 1976, 215ff.

12. Cf. J. Frankowski, "Problemy autorstwa do Hebrajczyków i etapy egzegezy katolickiej w dobie współczesnej", Studia Theologica Varsaviensia 6, 1968, 201-33. Article only available in NTA in summary; also 7, 3-33.
13. Cf. the pre-1943 book by W. Leonard, The Authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, London 1939, which gives a traditional Roman Catholic defence of the Pauline authorship.
14. J. Coppens, "L'État présent des études pauliniennes", ETL 1956, 366. E. Grässer, "Der Hebräerbrief 1938-63", ThR(NF)30, 1964, 145 gives a list of the Catholic exegetes who postulate an independent Pauline writer.
15. M. Dibelius, Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur, vol.ii, 1926
16. Cf. p.lx of his commentary.
17. Quoted in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 6.26.14.
18. op.cit, T1, 39
19. J.J. Wettstein, Novum Testamentum Graecum, Amsterdam 1752.
20. op.cit.88f. In his updated and shortened commentary, L'Épître aux Hébreux, Paris 1977, 15, he comes to similar conclusions.
21. First made by Menegos, La Théologie de l'Épître aux Hébreux, Paris, 1894, 198, quoted from Spicq, op.cit T1, 91 .
22. Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger, Regensburg 1968, 306
23. S.G. Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews, Zurich 1965, 66.
24. R. Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews Leiden 1970.
25. ibid. 10
26. ibid. 576

27. O. Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer,¹⁰ Göttingen, 1957.
28. Given to the Israel Society for Bible Research at Jerusalem on March 19, 1957.
29. Published as "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews", Scripta Hierosolymitana, ed. Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin, Jerusalem 1958, 36-55.
30. *ibid.* 38.
31. This view had already been given in earlier articles; cf. O. Cullmann, "The significance of the Qumran texts for research into the beginnings of Christianity", JBL 74, 1955, 213ff; F.M. Braun, "L'Arrière-fond judaïque du quatrième et de la Communauté de l'Alliance", RB 62, 5ff. It has been followed and developed by many scholars: C. Spicq, "L'Épître aux Hébreux, Apollos, Jean Baptiste, les Hellénistes et Qumran", RQ 1, 1959, 365-390; J. Betz, Die Eucharistie in der Zeit der griechischen Väter, Fribourg-en-Br., 1961, Vol. ii, 145; R. Schnackenburg, Die Kirche im Neuen Testament, Fribourg-en-Br., 1961, 85; J.W. Bowman, Hebrews, London 1962, 13-16; M. Delcor, "Melchisedek from Genesis to the Qumran texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews", JSJ 2, 1971, 126.
32. H. Kosmala, Hebräer-Essener-Christen, Leiden 1959; cf. also J. Daniélou, The Dead Sea Scrolls and Primitive Christianity, Paris 1957, 112.
33. F.F. Bruce, "'To the Hebrews' or 'To the Essenes'", NTS 9, 1963, 217-252 and J. Coppens, "Les analogies qumrâniennes de l'Épître aux Hébreux", NouvRTh 84, 1961, 128-141 and 257-282; cf. also H. Braun, "Qumran und das Neue Testament. Ein Bericht über zehn Jahre Forschung", ThRund., 30, 1964, 274, who also rejects Spicq's position.
34. Bruce, art.op.cit., 232
35. Comm. 10th Ed., iii
36. David Flusser, "The Dead Sea Sect and pre-pauline Christianity", Scripta Hierosolymitana, Jerusalem 1958, Vol. iv, 215. He considered that Hebrews' affinities with Qumran go back to pre-pauline Christianity; cf. also H. Braun, art.op.cit., 1-38; H.W. Montefiore,

op.cit.16ff; E. Grässer, op.cit. 171-177; A.J.B. Higgins, "The Priestly Messiah", NTS 13, 1967, 232ff.

37. Cf B. Gärtner, The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the NT, Cambridge 1965, esp. 88-99.

38. A.S. Van der Woude, "Melchisedek als himmlische Erlöser-gestalt in den neuerfundenen eschatologischen Midrashim aus Qumran Höhle xi", Oudtestamentliche Studien 14, 1965, 354-373. He gives a Hebrew transcription and an English translation. For other Hebrew transcriptions with English translation cf. M. de Jonge and A.S. Van der Woude, "II Q Melchisedek and the NT", NTS 12, 1966, 301-326 and J.A. Fitzmyer, "Further light on Melchisedek from Qumran Cave 11", JBL 86, 1967, 25-41; Y. Yadin, "A note on Melchisedek and Qumran", Israel Exploration Journal 15, 1965, 152-154 offers some improvements on Van der Woude's original transcription. For a Hebrew transcription and a French translation cf. J. Carmignac, "Le document de Qumran sur Melchisédek", RQ vii, 1970, 343-78 and J.T. Milik, "Milki-Sedeq et Milki-Resa dans les anciens écrits juifs et chrétiens", JJS xxii, 1972, 95ff. Carmignac has also drawn attention to a Russian translation by J.D. Amoussine in Vestnik Drevnej Istorii, Moscow 1967, 45-62.

39. Deuteronomy 15.2; Isaiah 61.1; Leviticus 25.10; Isa.52.7.

40. op.cit.152-54

41. op.cit.372ff

42. op.cit.318; cf also 322 where they state that the Melchisedek conception of Hebrews was influenced by notions which are also found at Qumran but do not assume that Hebrews was influenced directly by Qumran.

43. op.cit.267

44. F.L. Horton, The Melchisedek Tradition, a critical examination of the sources to the fifth century AD and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Cambridge 1976, 161.

45. J.C. McCullough, "Melchisedek's varied role in early exegetical tradition", ThReview 1, 1978, 57f and also 63,N.2 for a list of the more recent

literature on the subject.

46. G.W. Buchanan, "The present state of scholarship on Hebrews", Christianity, Judaism and other Graeco-Roman Cults, ed.J. Neusner, Leiden 1975, 299-330.
47. Shinya Nomoto, "Herkunft und Struktur der Höhenpriestervorstellung im Hebräerbrief", NT 10, 1968, 14 postulates that the author is using an apocalyptic-Hellenistic Jewish tradition of Melchisedek interpretation; cf. G. Theissen, Untersuchungen zum Hebräerbrief, Gütersloh 1969 for a similar view.
48. An expression used by S. Sandmel, "Parallelomania", JBL 81, 1962, 1ff.
49. R. Perdelwitz, "Das literarische Problem des Hebräerbriefes", ZNW 11, 1910, 59ff, 105ff.
50. G. Bornkamm, "Das Bekenntnis im Hebräerbrief", ThL, 1942, 56ff reprinted in Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, 1959, 188ff.
51. T.W. Manson, op.cit. 242ff.
52. Ibid, 254.
53. E. Käsemann, Das Wandernde Gottesvolk, Göttingen 1938, (present ed. 1961).
54. Cf. J.M. Robinson, "The Coptic Gnostic Library today", NTS 14, 1967/68, 372ff for a discussion of the evidence for non-Christian Gnosticism provided by the finds of Nag-Hammadi. For an up-to-date discussion cf. E. Yamauchi, "Pre-Christian Gnosticism in the Nag-Hammadi texts", Church History 48, 1979, 129ff.
55. Cf. J.M. Robinson, op.cit. 380 who thinks that while Qumran has produced no evidence of a gnostic redeemer, "it has indicated steps towards Gnosticism"; cf.also H. Ringren, "Qumran and Gnosticism" in Le origini dello gnosticismo, Colloquio di Messina 13-18 Aprile 1966, ed. Ugo Bianchi, Leiden 1970, 379ff and in the same volume, M. Mansoor, "The Nature of Gnosticism in Qumran", 399.
56. "The significance of the Qumran text for research into the beginnings of Christianity," JBL 74, 1955,

p213f., reprinted in The Scrolls and the NT, ed. K. Stendahl, New York 1957, 18-32; cf. also his "L'Opposition contre le temple de Jerusalem", NTS 5, 1959, 157ff.

57. M. Simon, "Éléments gnostiques chez Philon", Le origini dello gnosticismo, 359-374

58. In Le Origini dello gnosticismo, xxviff., the following definitions of Gnosticism are offered: Gnosticism is the term used to describe the fully developed myths of the second century; proto-gnosticism is the term used to describe earlier primitive forms; pregnosticism describes ideas not yet lodged in a gnostic framework but usable therein once the occasion arises.

59. J.M. Robinson and Helmut Koester, Trajectories through early Christianity, Philadelphia 1971.

60. I. Batdorf, "Hebrews and Qumran, old methods and new directions", Festschrift to honor F. Wilbur Gingrich, ed. E.H. Barth and R.E. Cockroft, Leiden 1972, 26ff. attempts to do this on a small scale. He tries "to fix the cultural milieu underlying Hebrews and Qumran on its trajectory and to discuss both literatures in that light". His conclusions were that "both Hebrews and Qumran (in the limited ways we have suggested) would surely play some part in a gnostic trajectory..." A Ph.D student of Koester has also attempted to find a place for Hebrews "within a diverse and pluralistic situation"; cf. Lala Kalyan Kumar Dey, The Intermediary world and patterns of perfection in Philo and Hebrews, SBL Dissertation Series, Missoula, 1975.

61. O. Hofius, Der Vorhang vor dem Thron Gottes. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Heb. 6.19f und 10.19f, Tübingen 1972.

62. H.-M. Schenke, "Erwägungen zum Rätsel des Hebräerbriefes", NT und christliche Existenz, Festschrift für H. Braun zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. H.D. Betz und L. Schottroff, 421-437.

63. *ibid.* 433f; this view is also supported by K.M. Fischer, ThL 99, 1974, 598f.

64. R. Williamson, "The background of the Epistle to the Hebrews", ET 87, 1975/76, 232-237.
65. ibid. 236
66. Cf. G. Scholem, Die jüdische Mystik in ihren Hauptströmungen, Zurich, 1957 and Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition, 2nd ed. New York 1965 and Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala, StJud. 3, Berlin 1962, 15-29; J. Maier, "Das Gefährdungsmotiv bei der Himmelsreise in der jüdischen Apokalyptik und Gnosis", Kairos 5, 1963, 18-40 and Vom Kultus zur Gnosis. Studien zur Vor und Frühgeschichte der "jüdischen Gnosis", Bundeslade, Gottes-
thron und Merkabah, Salzburg 1964
67. R. Williamson, op.cit.236
68. ibid.236
69. For a list of those who date the epistle before AD 70 and those who date it after, cf. J.A.T. Robinson, op.cit.200.
70. Cf. J.A.T. Robinson, op.cit.; G.W. Buchanan, To the Hebrews, New York 1972, 257; cf. also A. Strobel, Der Hebräerbrief, Göttingen, 1975, quoted in Robinson, op.cit.201,N.11. Two major commentaries written in 1964 have also dated the epistle pre-AD 70; cf. Bruce and Montefiore.
71. Cf. H. Thyen, Der Stil der jüdisch-hellenistischen Homilie, Göttingen 1955, 17 who postulates that the ending is not original as does Buchanan, op.cit.,267 who assumes that all of chapter 13 is an addition.
72. Cf. Spicq, op.cit.,24 and W. Marxsen, Introduction to the NT(ET), Philadelphia 1970, 217.
73. F. Renner, An die Hebräer - ein pseudepigraphischer Brief, Münsterschwarzbach, 1970
74. Cf. note 71.
75. Cf. J. Swetnam, "On the literary genre of the 'Epistle' to the Hebrews", NT 11, 1969, 261-269 esp. 266ff.

76. H. Thyen, op.cit., 17; cf Swetnam, op.cit., 261: "The 'Epistle' to the Hebrews is basically a homily, with a few words attached at the end after the manner of a letter"; cf. Buchanan, op.cit., 246 who thinks that it is a homiletic midrash on Psalm 110.

77. This phrase was used by J. Nuilenberg in a lecture printed in JBL 88, 1969, called "Form criticism and beyond", where he talked about examining the "structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit".

78. Cf., for example, K.E. Bailey, Poet and Peasant, Michigan 1976 and Through Peasant Eyes, Michigan 1980, who applied this methodology to the parables; J. Bligh Galatians in Greek. A Structural Analysis of St. Paul Epistle to the Galatians, Detroit 1966; J. Dewey, "The literary structure of the controversy stories in Mark 2.1-3.6", JBL 92, 1973, 396-401; A.J. Ehlen, The Poetic Structure of a Hodayat from Qumran, unpub. Diss. Harvard Divinity School, 1970; J. Jeremias, "Chiasmus in den Paulusbriefen", Abba, Göttingen 1966, 276-289.

79. In Memorial Lagrange, ed. L.-H. Vincent, Paris 1940, 269-277.

80. Cf. K.E. Bailey, Poet and Peasant, 49ff. for many examples; cf. also R. Gyllenberg, "Die Komposition des Hebräerbriefes", Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok, 22/23, 1957/58, 137-147 for further discussion of a symmetrically constructed outline to the epistle.

81. La Structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux, Paris 1963; cf. also his A Structured Translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Rome 1964 and Situation du Christ, Épître aux Hébreux 1 et 2, Paris 1969 which is a commentary on Heb. 1-2 based on the structure he had already proposed. His article "Discussions sur la structure de l'Épître aux Hébreux", Biblica 55, 1974, 349-380 is a detailed defence and modification of his thesis in the light of the discussions of the previous ten years.

82. For a summary of scholarly reactions cf. Vanhoye

"Discussions...", op.cit., 349-361.

83. G.W. Buchanan, "The present state of scholarship on Hebrews", op.cit., 316 omits chapter 13 from his scheme; J.Bligh, Chiastic Analysis of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heythrop 1966, divides the epistle into 25 sections, but his work was not available for this article.

84. "Form and Content in Hebrews 1-6", Biblica 53, 1972, 368-385 and "Form and Content in Hebrews 7-13", Biblica 55, 1974, 333-348.

85. Cf. his Structured Translation, 3f.

86. "Form and Content in Hebrews 7-13", 333f.

87. "Form and Content in Hebrews 1-6", 385.

(To be continued)

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P. Kyle McCarter: I Samuel: a new translation with introduction and commentary
(Anchor Bible)

Doubleday 1980

pp xxii, 475 \$14.00

The important Anchor Bible series of commentaries is enhanced by the addition of this new volume by P. Kyle McCarter, a young scholar at the University of Virginia; a new star on the Old Testament horizon, it may be confidently asserted. McCarter acknowledges at the start a great debt to F.M. Cross of Harvard, and it may fairly be said that this commentary is a typical product of the Cross "school". The index of authors by itself indicates the influence of Cross; the other names of most frequent reference are, naturally, those of the major commentators of the past (not forgetting Wellhausen and S.R. Driver on textual matters).

The name one would like to have seen more often is that of J. Mauchline, whose valuable and judicious commentary is listed in the bibliography but never apparently used or referred to.

Readers familiar with the series will not be surprised by the lay-out and format, nor by the general approach. For each passage, McCarter's own translation is provided, to which very full textual notes are appended; "Notes" (on subject matter) follow; and each section is rounded off with "Comment", a more coherent treatment of the passage as a whole. There are of course an introduction, bibliography, and indices, and a number of very clear and useful outline maps at appropriate points in the book. The virtues of this lay-out are clear enough - especially in the fact that readers unversed in textual criticism may readily avoid those sections - but there are times when one has to search awhile to find the discussion one wants, since it might conceivably be in "Textual Notes", "Notes", or "Comment". However, this is a minor enough irritation.

The most important feature of the commentary is without question its textual critical data and discussion,

not least because the author had access to all the unpublished Qumran materials in F.M. Cross's hands. Old Testament scholarship has been waiting patiently for direct access to these materials on Samuel these many years; in the past we have been permitted some access via BHS, the NAB's textual notes, and one or two monographs. It is very useful indeed to have such detailed attention now to the textual data on I Samuel - and one hopes that McCarter's companion volume on II Samuel will not be long delayed. On the whole McCarter's textual judgement seems sound to the reviewer; no two scholars will ever agree on every textual problem in Samuel, and it would be easy enough for the reviewer to compile a list of instances where his decision would be different (starting with the very first such problem, in I Samuel 1:1 !). This would be pointless, however; suffice it to say that on two general principles of approach the author and reviewer seem to be in full agreement. Firstly, that while full use must be made of new data, the Qumran material needs careful weighing; it is not by any means consistently superior to the Masoretic Text. Secondly, a criterion (perhaps the criterion) which seems of paramount importance is that a shorter text is usually more likely to be original than a longer one.

The notes on subject matter are very full; for most readers the main value of the commentary will lie here. McCarter's is the most detailed commentary in English for many years, and is much more exhaustive than the English version of Hertzberg's commentary (ET 1964). One area of discussion somewhat neglected here is the **linguistic**. For example, the meaning of the name Nabal (chapter 25) certainly deserves discussion; one may reasonably doubt whether his mother really intended to saddle him with the name "Fool" all his life. McCarter is also liable to ignore recent suggestions for reinterpreting Old Testament vocabulary, some of which are featured in the NEB; an example occurs in 31:12, when McCarter translates the Hebrew verb s-r-p as "burned" without discussion (contrast NEB "anointed"). His decision may well be right, nevertheless.

The comment sections, plus the introduction, make an important contribution to the literary critical study of Samuel. This indeed is the chief thrust of the comment

sections, which consistently offer McCarter's literary critical analysis - rather to the detriment of other matters, it must be said. The message, sequence of thought and theology of I Samuel as a whole get disappointingly scanty attention in a volume of this size. The detailed analysis, which by its very nature tends to highlight (exaggerate?) inconsistencies of any sort which may be found in the text, has the effect of fragmenting the biblical text.

In his analysis, McCarter at least shows the virtue of independent thinking. He may be radical at one point (as for instance when he insists, against the mainstream of recent thought, that the birth-story of chapter 1 is that of Saul transferred to Samuel - a theory by no means new, but not easy to sustain) and yet relatively conservative at another (e.g. on the originality of the critique of kingship in chapter 8). If his judgement is less sure-footed in literary criticism and matters of historicity than elsewhere, his views and viewpoints are by no means negligible, and take account of much recent scholarship. His commentary seems certain to be the standard work in English for a good while to come; we look forward to II Samuel.

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E. Earle Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutic in
Early Christianity, Tübingen, 1978
XVII, 289 DM 83

This volume of seventeen NT essays is bound together by two themes, the role of the pneumatics in the missionary enterprise of the early church and in the formation of the Christian theology of the OT.

They represent a significant contribution to NT scholarship with a number of important insights that have a bearing on basic texts to do with the movement of charismatic renewal within the church, the nature of prophecy and its relationship to Biblical interpretation.

In the first essay, "Paul and his Co-workers"(3-22), the author inquires into the role of Paul's many associates and points out that no colleague is called prophet, teacher or pastor but rather co-worker(sunergos), brother(adelphos), servant(diakonos) or apostle(6). The diakonoi are a special class of co-worker, active in preaching and teaching, itinerant but also based in local congregations with a right to remuneration(9). Apostles are a special class of diakonoi. Apostles are absent from Paul's ongoing circle, perhaps because of their dominical commission and their relative independence in carrying out the commission(13). Of special note are the associates known as 'brothers'(adelphoi), for while adelphoi may apply to Christians in general, it is probable that the phrase "the brothers"(hoi adelphoi) may refer to a relatively limited group of workers(15). As a designation of colleagues in religious work, it is also found in first-century Judaism.

The second essay, "'Spiritual' Gifts in the Pauline Community"(23-44), claims that the co-workers belong to the category of the pneumatikoi, spiritual ones. It denies that pneumatika(spiritual gifts) and charismata are to be identified(as they usually are in 1 Cor.12.1) but suggests that while charisma can be applied to any or all of the gifts, pneumatikon is restricted to "gifts of inspired perception, verbal proclamation and/or its interpretation". Thus for Paul the pneumatics are prophets(29). In connection with this, Dr Ellis suggests that 'spirits' in 1 Corinthians 14.12 refer to 'angelic powers'(but cf "gifts of the Spirit"

TEV., NEB.), for example, "the spirits of the pneumatics, the inspired speakers are...angelic powers"(37). The background for such an opinion is to be found in Apocalyptic Judaism(39).(Cf. the argument ad loc.)

In the third essay, "'Wisdom' and 'Knowledge' in 1 Corinthians"(45-62), the roles of the prophet and the wise man are linked together in the person of the pneumatic who manifests the gifts and fruits of the Spirit(62). In the fourth essay, "Christ and Spirit in 1 Corinthians"(63-71), he inquires into the meaning of pneuma in Paul's thought and the relationship of pneuma to Christ. Like W.D. Davies(St. Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, London, 1948), he regards the OT and Judaism as the decisive influence for Paul's understanding of the term. Paul identifies the Spirit with the exalted Lord and also with God(68), and yet the same things cannot be said of the Spirit that are spoken of Christ. The relationship of the Spirit to Christ is both one of distinction as well as of identity. Dr Ellis attempts, not very successfully perhaps, to explain why, if the role of angels is to be recognized in connection with the pneumatic gifts, they are so seldom mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14(71).

In the fifth essay, "Christ Crucified"(72-79), he points out that, apart from the Gospels, the words 'Cross'(stauros) and "crucified"(estauromenos) appear almost exclusively in Pauline literature. Paul speaks of "Christ crucified" in reference primarily to the exalted Lord who, in his exaltation, remains the crucified one(73). He is both the message and the one who speaks in and through the word. The error of the Corinthians lies in their misconception of the way in which their present participation in Christ's resurrection and power is to be manifested. The real wisdom is Christ's wisdom, who, in his exaltation, remains the crucified, the serving and the sacrificing one(79).

The sixth essay, "Paul and his Opponents"(80-115) summarizes the attempts of scholars from the 17th century onwards to identify the opponents of Paul including Jewish legalists, gnostics or a combination of both. In Dr Ellis's view, the primary opposition to his mission

arose "from within a segment of the ritually strict Hebraioi in the Jerusalem church." Sometimes they posed as a counter mission, sometimes as "an infiltrating influence, a settled and persistent 'other' Gospel" (115), and in addition, at times, laying claim to pneumatic powers and experiences.

Essay 7 ("The Circumcision Party and the Early Christian Mission" (116-128)) is notable for the identification of the Hebraioi and "those of the circumcision" (hoi ek peritomēs) as referring to Jewish Christians with a strict attitude toward the Jewish cultus and customs while Hellenists have a freer attitude (the distinction between Hellenists and Hebrews is not, as is usually understood in Acts 6, one of language but one of attitude). Both were present in pre-Christian Palestinian Judaism as well as in the Diaspora.

In the final essay of the first part ("The Role of the Christian prophet in Acts", 129-144), prophecy is seen as possible for everyone but as primarily identified with certain leaders who exercise it as a ministry; in the interpretation of Scripture there is no sharp division between prophet and teacher; the elder like the prophet has a teaching function in addition to that of general oversight (142).

Of particular interest in the second part (essays 9-17) for this review is the final essay, "New Directions in Form Criticism", where Dr Ellis builds his essay on the treatment of H. Schürmann "that the historical circumstances of Jesus' mission presuppose for certain of his teachings a Sitz im Leben Jesu (life situation of Jesus) i.e. a sociological locus in which the teachings were given typical transmission forms" (242). It is suggested that some written formulations of Jesus' teachings were being transmitted among his followers already during his earthly ministry on the basis that some of his pre-resurrection followers knew Greek and that Jewish children in the first century AD were taught to write (for other reasons see 243ff). Dr Ellis further suggests that Jesus follows literary forms from rabbinic and apocalyptic literature, and gives as an example of the yelammedenu (= "Let our Master teach us") form the context and parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.25-

37) and as an example of the proem Midrash the parable of the wicked tenants(Matthew 21.33-44). Thus we have a Jesus who, in the face of opposition from the Jewish theologians and churchmen, instructed his followers in his new understanding of Scripture(253).

It is difficult to do justice in a short review to the numerous fresh, original and thoughtful interpretations in these essays. The bases for some of the views in Scripture are at times quite slender but merit serious consideration. No reader can fail to be grateful to Dr Ellis for such a valuable contribution to our studies. We noted 'engangered' for 'endangered'(128), the repetition in exact wording of a reference to Professor Schweizer on pp 35 and 69, and, what is becoming an increasingly accepted form of speech especially in the USA, a split infinitive "to wrongly exalt"(41).

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George Howard, Crisis in Galatia,

A Study in early Christian theology,
Cambridge U.P., 1979, xii, 114, £5.95

This is a fresh and provocative approach to Galatians with some original interpretations which will challenge most people's understanding of the letter.

In common with other recent studies of Paul, the writer leaves Acts out of consideration - to return at a later date - and confines himself almost exclusively to Galatians. He contends that many of the problems arising from the relationship of Galatians to Acts are caused by a misunderstanding of Galatians. Two things arise from the study, that Galatians is to be dated early, and probably the earliest of Paul's letters, and that the Jerusalem conference of Acts 15 is not to be equated with that of Galatians 2.

The title of the book, "Crisis in Galatia", suggests his method in approaching Pauline theology. He writes,

"Paul's genius is seen best when his theology is allowed to arise from the historical setting of his opponents and his methods in preaching the Gospel. An understanding of Paul's theology and biblical historical exegesis go hand in hand. It is the historical exegetical process which must come first if there is to be a genuine understanding of Paul's theology." (p.ix)

The book begins with a survey of the research of the attempts to identify Paul's opponents since F.C. Baur's time(cf. Dr. Ellis' essays reviewed above), and gives the author's own conclusion - that the agitators at Galatia were Jewish Christian judaizers from Jerusalem who were forcing the Galatians to be circumcised and keep the law, on the face of it not a startling or unusual claim.

Yet Dr. Howard, in coming to his conclusion, goes about it in an unusual way. He argues that the so-called opponents treated Paul as an ally, thinking that he agreed with circumcision. Is this possible? Do such 'opponents', "who trouble...and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ....false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom...I wish those who

unsettle you would mutilate themselves" - naturally or easily warrant the description 'ally'? As an ally, Paul preached and practised circumcision(so they thought). But one problem arises for them. Paul, in his mission to Galatia, had not circumcised the Galatians. How do they explain this to themselves? Dr. Howard's suggestion is remarkable: the illness of Paul when he was with the Galatians was an unsightly affair, he could not risk alienating them further by asking them to be circumcised. What kind of conviction about an essential practice could the Judaizers imagine this to be? Was their conviction not matched by that of Paul's?

It is a commonplace of NT interpretation that Paul insists on his independence for his apostleship and Gospel from the Jerusalem apostles and this is the force of his argument in Chapter 1 and 2. Sentences such as 'an apostle - not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father....the Gospel which was preached by me is not man's Gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ' in the context of his general argument are assumed to support it. Dr. Howard suggests another line of interpretation. Paul rather was concerned to be quiet about the nature of the revelation that was given to him, making him apostle to the uncircumcised Gentiles. So for fourteen years he preached to Gentiles and waited until the work was consolidated before he informed the apostles. He got his commission directly from Christ because no man had it beforehand to pass it on to him. (p.35). Problems concerning this interpretation are fairly obvious - did the Jerusalem apostles not know for a long period of preaching over fourteen years of this assignation to the Gentile mission or could they not even suspect it?

There is also the interpretation of 'according to revelation'(*kata apokalupsin*). Dr. Howard suggests we are justified in translating it "Because of the revelation", as explaining the purpose of Paul's visit, to tell of his commission to preach the Gospel to the uncircumcised. It is usual, however, to translate "by revelation" as showing that Paul was not summoned to Jerusalem but went up under the guidance of God, i.e. he did it quite

independently. Dr. Howard goes on to claim that "in Galatians we get a glimpse into that moment of history when steps were taken to expand the borders of the church for the incorporation of all nations" - not at Acts 10 or 15 (the latter is not to be equated with the conference of Galatians 2) as Luke tells us. The more natural interpretation of "kata apokalupsin" as a Greek phrase and suited to the context is "by revelation" i.e. a special revelation at the time.

In Galatians, we are told that Peter first ate with Gentiles, then withdrew when "certain men came from James". This vacillation Dr. Howard explains as due to the recent nature of the revelation of the non-circumcision Gospel as given by Paul. Yet he does also argue that it was a theological conviction of Peter that Gentiles have to be circumcised to be saved (p.25). Thus when Paul says to Peter, "How can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?", the word 'compel' means, not compulsion brought about by the effect of his vacillating example but a real compulsion, the result of conviction.

Certain parts of the letter are difficult to piece together or to harmonize. It is this disparity of material with its "obscurity, inconsequence and contradiction" (J.C. O'Neill, The Recovery of Paul's letter to the Galatians, London, 1972, p.86) that leads Professor O'Neill to posit that we have an edited version in which, among others, the moral admonitory passage has been added (5.13-6.10). Can Paul possibly attack Jewish-Christian judaizers by inserting a catalogue of Moral failures? Dr. Howard says he can for Paul is attacking the theology of such Jewish practice (pp 12,14). Again, the phrase Hoi peritemnomenoi does not refer to Gentiles ("those who are being circumcised") but to Judaizers ("Those who advocate circumcision").

Other problems raised by the book include the claim that the Galatians did not know of the distinctions between Jewish and Gentile practices, that the one single theme of the letter is the non-circumcised motif (p.49), that the sentence "He who by faith is righteous shall live" (Habakkuk 2.4) refers, not to the faith of the believer, but to the faithfulness of God even in a NT

context(p.63ff); that the phrase "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness" does not lay the emphasis on 'believed' but on God's 'reckoning' (in the context of Romans 4, the major emphasis is probably on 'believed' in relation to Paul's discussion but the action of God is also important); and that the Greek phrase 'hē pietis tou Christou' means the 'faith of Christ'(cf. notably the arguments set out in footnote 191,(p.95) for this rendering, which seem quite inadequate, being based on examples from Hellenistic Jewish literature, and early versions which, in any case, would tend to be literal) e.g. we have to translate, "A man is not justified by works of the law but through the faith-act(faithfulness) of Jesus Christ"(not "through faith in Jesus Christ"); and, finally, that 'faith' in man implies attainment for Paul since it did this in the contemporary world(p.56).

Dr. Howard is to be congratulated on an unusual and exciting attempt to interpret Galatians in a novel way. He may appear to find often what he wants to find and not to escape the danger of which we may all be aware, of being manipulated by our own presuppositions. No one, however, who reads this book carefully can fail to be helped and stimulated. We suspect the author is rather more tentative than would appear at times in his claims. We find recurring expressions like "If this reconstruction is correct"(p.11), "if the above arguments are sound"(p.28), "If we have interpreted the events in Paul's life correctly"(p.44). Must we, however, really accept a monstrosity like "unfulfillability"(pp 50,59)?

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David Bebbington: Patterns in History
 Inter-Varsity Press 1979, pp xi, 211
 £3.75

The Christian theologian or indeed the thoughtful Christian can hardly escape an interest in history for his concern is with God who has made himself known in history which he initiated and will bring to its climax and end. It is not surprising therefore that there is a considerable and constantly growing literature on the subject of the Christian interpretation of history.

"Patterns in History", however, is of special interest because it is the work of a professional historian. Dr. David Bebbington is a Cambridge trained historian and a former research Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, now on the staff of the University of Stirling. In January of this year he visited Union Theological College in Belfast and those who enjoyed his sparkling lectures on that occasion will be particularly interested in this book.

Dr. Bebbington confesses that his title "Patterns in History", is deliberately ambiguous. Has history a pattern and if so what is that pattern's shape? "Men wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a predetermined pattern", declared H.A.L. Fisher.....

"I can see only one emergency following upon another as wave follows upon wave, only one great fact with respect to which, since it is unique, there can be no generalisations, only one safe rule for the historian that he should recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen."

Yet even Fisher did see a pattern in history for later in the preface to his famous "History of Europe" he could write, apparently without any sense of contradiction, "The fact of progress is written plain and large on the page of history." The model of progress, a linear pattern, is, of course, only one of the patterns men have 'found' in history, and only one of the patterns

Dr. Bebbington discusses.

He discusses also the ambiguity of our English word, history itself, which means both the past as in "the long and tragic train of history" and the historian's portrait of the past as in "A history of Ireland". History as written by historians, Dr. Bebbington warns us, is inevitably imperfect and incomplete. Historiography can never recapture the totality of the past. It is always conditioned both by the evidence available to the historian and the perspective from which he interprets that evidence. "The historian's history", writes Dr. Bebbington, "is moulded by his values, his outlook, his world-view." Thus "finality is never obtainable in history," and there can be "no universally accepted story of the past", though Dr. Bebbington rejects the scepticism of those who find "all historical assertions too dubious to be given credence."

In the old debate about whether history is a science or an art, Dr. Bebbington argues wisely for complementarity. And he recommends complementarity also in the debate between the 'positivist' and the 'idealist' philosophies of historiography, between those who believe that the historian's task is one of empirical investigation to establish general laws as in the physical sciences, and those who consider that each historical situation is unique, requiring an approach of imaginative involvement by the historian for its elucidation.

In his survey of the patterns that have been found in history Dr. Bebbington is refreshingly free from the parochialism of a restricted European perspective. He shows that in China, India and the Middle East, as in the more familiar Graeco-Roman world, the pattern most frequently discerned was circular or cyclical, following the pattern of the seasons in nature or the stages of human life - birth, growth, decay and death. Cyclical philosophies of history tend to be pessimistic and not surprisingly have been reappearing in the twentieth century in the thought of men like Nietzsche, Spengler

and Toynbee though Toynbee's religious - but not orthodox Christian - outlook allows him a little optimism, the confidence that "the perpetual turning of a wheel is not a vain repetition if at each revolution, it is carrying a vehicle that much nearer its goal."

In all Dr. Bebbington distinguishes five broad categories of philosophy of history - the cyclical, the biblical or Judaeo-Christian, the modern idea of progress associated with the Enlightenment, the Romantic reaction against the Enlightenment view which is usually labelled 'historicist' and which corresponds to the 'idealist' approach to historiography described above, and finally the influential historical materialism of Marxism.

Dr. Bebbington's detailed analyses of these categories is admirably clear and original, offering illuminating flashes of insight and information. Thus he suggests that a better understanding of Ranke's famous phrase wie es eigentlich gewesen - the shibboleth of generations of modern historians - is achieved if we translate eigentlich, not as it is normally translated now as 'actually', but as it was understood in Ranke's day, as 'essentially'. He properly shows that the Marxist philosophy of history is neither so monolithic nor so simple as is popularly supposed. Marx and Engels differed in their emphases and there have been and are differing schools of Marxist historiography. Marx and 'Marxists' have not taught that the economic is the only determining element in history but that it is ultimately the determining element and they do not try to explain the experience of a Luther or a Wesley completely in terms of economic circumstances.

Dr. Bebbington's main concern, however, is to expound and recommend a Christian philosophy of history which he believes, in its inner coherence and outer correspondence with the realities of man's historical experience, is much to be preferred to the dismal pessimism of cyclic views on the one hand, and the groundless optimism of ideas of progress, Marxist or humanist on the other.

Most Christians will agree with Dr. Bebbington in his affirmation of faith in a quotation from C.K. Barrett's History and Faith: The Story of the Passion,

"The death and resurrection of Jesus show the meaning God puts on life, and manifest the pattern of history as God himself understands it."

Not all will agree, however, with his more detailed analysis of the Christian understanding of history, which, he insists, involves three convictions:

"That God intervenes in it; that he guides it in a straight line; and that he will bring it to the conclusion that he has planned."

Dr. Bebbington makes no concessions to, and does not discuss, the influential Bultmannian position that

"The historical method includes the presupposition that history is a unity in the sense of a closed continuum of effects in which individual events are connected by the succession of cause and effect,"

and that this continuum "cannot be rent by the interference of supernatural, transcendent powers."

It is easier to believe that God can and does 'intervene' in history than to demonstrate precisely how and where he has intervened outside the heilsgeschichte of special revelation. I do not find the example Dr. Bebbington quotes from Richard Baxter that the peaceful circumstances of the restoration of Charles II in 1660 demonstrated divine providence at work particularly persuasive, but Dr. Bebbington himself admits that "Perhaps proof of anything is beyond the power of historical evidence."

There is an excellent bibliography which rather surprisingly omits Berdyaev's The Meaning of History,

which contains a devastating critique of the doctrine of progress in history but this is a very minor blemish in a work which is characterized in the main by erudition and wisdom. The book is attractively produced and reasonably priced at £3.75. I detected only one misprint, Huizingar for Huizinga, the name of the distinguished Dutch historian on page 140.

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Belfast.

R.F.G. Holmes.

Books Received

- W. Barclay, Great Themes of the NT, (Ed. Cyril Rodd),
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- John Baker, The Prophetic Line, Saint Andrew Press,
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- G. Bromiley, Children of Promise, The case for baptizing
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- Edmund P. Clowney, Christian Meditation, Inter-Varsity
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- John Coventry, Faith in Jesus Christ, Darton, Longman
and Todd Ltd., 1980, pp 56, £1.50
- John Dalrymple, Longest Journey, Notes on Christian
maturity, Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd., 1979,
pp 102, £2.20
- Edmund Flood, O.S.B., Today's Catholic, Darton, Longman
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- Roger Forster, Saturday Night...Monday Morning, IVP 1980
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- John Gray, The Biblical Doctrine of the Reign of God,
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- John Gladwin, God's People and God's World, Biblical
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- Michael Griffiths, Shaking the Sleeping Beauty, Arousing
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- Gerard J. Hughes, S.J., Moral Decisions, Darton, Longman
& Todd Ltd., 1980, pp60, £1.50.
- A.M. Hunter, Christ and the Kingdom, Saint Andrew Press,
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- J. Andrew Kirk, Theology Encounters Revolution,
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pp188, £2.95
- G.A.F. Knight, What Next?, Autobiography, Saint Andrew
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ians and Philemon, IVP, 1980, pp191, £2.65.
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1980, pp xviii, 199, £4.50
- Ulrich Schaffer, Into your Light, IVP, 1979, £2.95
- John R.W. Stott, God's New Society, The message of
Ephesians, 1979, pp291.
- Stephen H. Travis, Christian Hope and the Future of Man,
Issues in Contemporary Theology, 1980,
IVP, pp143.
- Michael Wilcock, The Saviour of the World, The message
of Luke's Gospel, IVP, 1979, pp215.
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Contributors

Contributions are welcome, preferably in English and should be typed.

It would be helpful if contributors could make use of an electric typewriter and type within the area indicated in any sample full page of the Journal. Worn ribbons produce a poor result in being photographed for lithographic plates. Carbon ribbons in typewriters of the Golf Ball type generally produce excellent results. 'Note' presentation should conform to that presented in the Journal.

All contributions should be sent direct to the
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